

Etheldreda House,

ELY.

ELY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

TO: The Chairman and Members,  
Ely Urban District Council.

Mr Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen - I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1953:-

1. STATISTICS: During 1953, the usual statistics have been kept and are available. These are not included in my report.

2. a. Ambulances: Two Ambulances are stationed at Ely both being operated by the Isle of Ely County Council. One is for Infectious Diseases and the other for non-infectious diseases.

The Littleport St. John Ambulance continues under the agency agreement with the County Council to maintain its fine record. I would remind the Council that both this Ambulance, and the County Council Ambulance at Ely are manned by members from the Ambulance and Nursing Divisions at Littleport and Ely respectively. The District owes these volunteers a real debt of gratitude for their skilful handling of patients and for their unfailing cheerfulness, often under very adverse and unpleasant circumstances.

b. Nursing and Clinic Arrangements: These are the same as for previous years. The District Nurses continue to maintain their fine record of service.

c. Hospitals: (i) Tower House Hospital for Chronic Sick.  
(ii) The Isolation Hospital.  
(iii) The Grange Maternity Home.

These Hospitals are under the control of the Regional Hospital Board.

3. WATER:

a. The supply for Ely, including Stuntney, Adelaide, Prickwillow and Chettisham is obtained from two wells and one borehole at the Council's Waterworks at Isleham. The condition of the plant including the pumping and chloramine equipment proved to be satisfactory throughout the year.

The quantity and the quality of the water has also proved satisfactory.

There have been no major breakdowns during the twelve months.

The plans for a new surface tank in Ely, to increase water storage in the City, and for the provision of a new 12 inch pumping main are at present under consideration by the Ministry of Health.

Referring to the condition of the present 12 inch pumping main, there have been no breakdowns during the year under review, and so far as can be ascertained, no apparent further deterioration has taken place. This, however, must not be allowed to produce a false sense of

## WATER (Contd.)

security regarding water supplies and storage for the City. The hope that no serious breakdown takes place in the near future can only be reiterated now, and I would state very emphatically that I shall feel extremely glad and relieved when the new pumping main has been laid, and further, when the water storage capacity of the City has been substantially increased.

b.(i) Four bacteriological examinations were made during the year by the Public Health Service Laboratory at Cambridge, and all proved satisfactory.

(ii) The water has no plumbo-solvent action.

(iii) No contamination was discovered during the year and, therefore, no action in respect of this has been necessary.

(iv) 96% of the dwelling houses in the area are supplied with water direct from public water mains.

4% of the dwelling houses in the area are supplied by stand-pipe.

It is estimated that the percentage of the population supplied approximates to the figures given above for houses.

Two small schemes covering extensions to two outlying properties (Clayway Farm and Brick Kiln Farm) are in preparation, and will shortly be submitted to the Ministry of Health.

(v) At the Waterworks, during May, the oil fuel pipes running from the storage tanks to the pumps were re-installed above the ground.

## 4. SEWAGE:

### i. Extensions:

(a) During the year a short length of sewer, and a small disposal works have been put in for new Council Houses in Prickwillow.

(b) The Downham Road Sewer has been completed and is now functioning satisfactorily.

(c) Referring to the Scheme for the improved Sewage Disposal Works in Ely, an outline Scheme has been submitted to the Ministry of Health, and approval, at any rate, in principle is hoped for early in the coming year.

(d) I can only repeat what I have noted in previous reports, that the present Disposal Works are far from complete and cannot be said to be satisfactory. A really satisfactory effluent cannot be obtained under present conditions, even with the closest attention and care, and I would urge that the Ministry of Health gives the most sympathetic consideration to the Council's present proposals.

(e) With the Surveyor I have given considerable attention to allegations of smell arising from the new Prickwillow Disposal Works, and our investigations are continuing.

(f) So far as the few lengths of open Water - course, acting as public sewers are concerned, I can only repeat my previous remarks, that Ministry assistance is the only remedy.

5. HOUSING:

(a)	Number of houses which on inspection were considered to be unfit for human habitation or in a condition prejudicial to health .....	123
(b)	Number of houses, the defects in which were remedied in consequence of informal action .....	95
(c)	Number of representations made to the local authority with a view to:-	
	(i) The serving of notices requiring the execution of works .....	0
	(ii) The making of demolition orders ....	1
(d)	Number of formal notices served requiring the execution of works .....	0
(e)	Number of demolition orders made .....	1
(f)	Number of houses in respect of which an undertaking was accepted (carried from 1952)..	5
(g)	Number of houses demolished .....	5
(h)	Number of formal notices served under the Public Health Act 1936 .....	0

Housing administration to-day presents many difficulties. Many houses in the district are sub-standard and let at rents of about 6/-d. or 7/-d. per week. Over the years they have slowly deteriorated and the owners naturally find it hard to carry out maintenance work on the money received. Demolition orders cannot be made haphazardly, and careful consideration must be given to maintaining a balance between new houses and the old.

Many people, especially in an area such as this, are paying such a small amount of rent that they are not anxious to move to Council estates with rents over £1. a week. Unfortunately this problem will be with us for a good many years.

Much careful work has been carried out by the Sanitary Inspector, and the Council owes much to the assiduous manner in which he has carried out his duties.

I am hopeful that, in the not too-distant future, as the housing situation eases, I may be able to report an increasing number of Demolition Orders on sub-standard, old properties in the City. I feel that some property owners, at any rate, would do well to make themselves more familiar, not only with modern housing standards, but also with the Demolition Order procedure generally. At times, one comes into contact with the occasional landlord, who not only seems utterly ignorant of the existence of any housing standards, but whom seems to care less.

Every effort is made by the Sanitary Inspector and myself to track down and deal with genuine cases of over-crowding: but this type of work can only be dealt with slowly.

6. SCHOOLS:

It is with great pleasure that I record the completion and opening of the St. Audrey School in Downham Road. In some 16 years this is the first

## SCHOOLS (Contd.)

occasion on which I have had one good word to say for any School in Ely.

It will be wonderful when I can report that there is no bad school property in the City.

### 7. MILK:

I have few comments to make this year. Most of the milk sold is designated and either comes from tuberculin tested herds or is pasteurised or both. I do notice, however, that loose undesignated milk is still sold in small quantities from premises over which the L.A. has no control whatsoever. We can only step into the picture if and when any damage is done, when action can be taken under the Milk & Dairies Regulation (1949). (S.I.1588/49).

### 8. INFECTIOUS DISEASE:

- (a) 488 notifications of infectious diseases were received. The total is made up as follows:-

Measles .....	378
Whooping Cough .....	95
Pneumonia .....	9
Meningococcal Meningitis .....	2
Puerperal Pyrexia .....	1
Infective Hepatitis .....	1
Anterior Poliomyelitis .....	1
Erysipelas .....	1
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Although there were so many cases of measles notified, I am glad to be able to report that generally speaking the cases were benign in character, and that there were no deaths.

- (b) Disinfection of premises etc., is regularly carried out in cases of notifiable disease; also when infection is reported, or requests are received for any special reasons.
- (c) It is with the greatest satisfaction that I record once again, that there has been no case of diphtheria in Ely during this year. This entirely satisfactory state of affairs will not be maintained if parents through inadvertance or deliberate neglect fail to have their young children inoculated. I hope that every Councillor will strive his or her hardest to impress on every citizen of Ely the urgency and necessity of inoculation.
- (d) Tuberculosis: 17 new cases were notified during the year. After making necessary adjustments, there are now the following numbers on the Register:-

<u>Respiratory.</u>	<u>Non-Respiratory.</u>
Male 21	4
Female 15	7

Compared with 1952, the total figure remains the same.

### 9. FOOD:

- a. i. 12 Premises are registered for the preparation of Sausages and Preserved Foods.

## FOOD (Contd.)

- ii. 26 Premises are registered for the storage and sale of Ice Cream.
- iii. Slaughterhouse improved during the year following the previous year structural improvements by the Ministry.
- b. The standard of eating places and shops generally in the district is improving. One or two, however, need to have a second look at their premises. At long last, most of the traders are becoming hygiene conscious and to encourage them in this attitude the public should only trade at shops which are clean and where the staff display clean habits. If any person notices a shopkeeper or assistant doing anything which is considered unhygienic he or she should notify the Public Health Department, when action will be taken in a confidential manner. We hope to achieve in the next few years complete co-operation between the shopkeepers and caterers, the public and the officers of the L.A. responsible for clean food. Only in this way can we achieve success in helping to reduce the steadily increasing numbers of food poisoning cases in the country.
- c. Once again, the importance of hot water, soap and clean towels cannot be too strongly emphasised. It is now a well established fact that if only food handlers in the shops and in the home would wash their hands regularly, the number of cases of intestinal infection would drop considerably. This is a fact which should be taught to children at school and in their homes. Hygiene generally, should be included in the school curriculum as an important part of a child's education.
- d. Flies should not be tolerated - in any place where food is prepared, sold or eaten. The dangers attached to such insects are underestimated. Sanitary Authorities everywhere are aware of the menace carried by flies. Many infectious illnesses are known to be spread by flies, and there is prima facie evidence that anterior poliomyelitis is transmitted in this manner.
- e. I am very grateful to those shopkeepers, and their assistants who have co-operated on this problem during the year.

## 10. MISCELLANEOUS:

- i. Insect Pest Control:  
Disinfection has been carried out where necessary and the numbers have been few this year. It is a noticeable thing that this is a relatively free area - most unlike the industrial centres of the country.
- ii. Shops:  
During the year the routine inspection of Shops under the Shops Act 1950, which cover Sanitary accommodation, temperatures and ventilation have been maintained. Many shopkeepers make sincere and continuous efforts to maintain good conditions and amenities for their employees during working hours. The small minority would do well to take careful stock of the conditions obtaining in their premises, as they will find themselves in serious trouble in the not too-distant future.

MISCELLANEOUS (Contd.)iii. Rodent Control:

- a. 301 Treatments were carried out during the year and very good progress is being made. Sewer tests made every year show that they are free from infestation.
- b. The rat is known infamously as a pest and destructive animal. What is not so well known is the fact that he is a carrier of many diseases and is a danger to health. His presence should not be tolerated and I must ask for more co-operation in reporting the presence of rats and mice to the department.

iv. Smoke Control:

A fairly favourable year and if any undue amount of smoke has been observed, the premises have been visited.

Trouble was experienced with the Tower House Hospital plant during the year. A standby boiler had to be used for a short time owing to a breakdown in the main boiler and the amount of smoke emission was considerable, causing much inconvenience to nearby residents. Within a few weeks the matter was rectified.

v. Moveable Dwellings:

During the year 8 caravans were licensed under the Public Health Act 1936. These are not too bad and with routine visits a fairly high standard is maintained. A little trouble was experienced with the usual mobile agricultural workers. So far as Public Health is concerned they are most undesirable. The existing Regulations relating to Moveable Dwellings are of no real use in dealing with, what might be under certain circumstances a real danger. In my opinion these Regulations require revising and definitely strengthening at an early date.

vi. Factories:

Usual routine inspections have taken place. It should be noted that a person spends a good deal of his life at his place of employment and good clean conditions should be provided by his employers.

vii. Common Lodging House:

There is one registered Common Lodging House in the district and regular routine inspections are made. Conditions have always been found to be satisfactory.

11. PERSONAL:

My personal thanks are due to the Sanitary Inspector Mr. H. Smith, M.S.I.A., A.R.San.I. for his cheerful co-operation, substantial assistance and loyalty. Mr. J.V.G. Shilston, A.M.I.C.E., M.I.Mun.E., etc., has as in the past given me much assistance and advice, and I wish to place on record my thanks to him also.

I have the honour to be,  
Ladies & gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) K. S. MAURICE SMITH,

Medical Officer of Health,  
Ely Urban District Council.

19th August, 1954.